

NICK J. RAHALL, II
3RD DISTRICT, WEST VIRGINIA

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE
RANKING MEMBER

www.rahall.house.gov

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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LOGAN, WV 25601
(304) 752-4934

December 13, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel:

As you consider the Fiscal Year 2015 Army budget proposal, we urge you to preserve the force structure and end strength of the Army National Guard and to leverage the operational reserve to increase cost-savings in the Total Army.

We understand that your soon-to-be-completed budget review is focused on rebalancing active and reserve forces in our Nation's long-term military strategy, which is commendable. With the operational reserve being rebuilt since September 11, 2001, this generation of Army National Guardsmen and Reservists has proven every bit as effective, committed, and capable as their active counterparts.

We believe that significant end strength and force structure cuts can be mitigated by better utilizing the Reserve Component, which would save money while sustaining defense capacity and capability. Blending Active and Reserve Component Army units, as the Air Force has begun to do with its Active Associate program, could ensure long-term budgetary savings to maintain a robust Total Army. As your Reserve Forces Policy Board (RFPB) recently noted, a blended Total Army composition means more combat capability at about one-third the cost.

Alternate cost-savings proposals under consideration that would reduce the Army National Guard to 315,000 soldiers – 35,000 fewer soldiers than pre-9/11 levels – are deeply troubling, especially considering the Army National Guard is the most cost-effective dual use force available. Knowing such draconian cuts alone may not be enough if the budget sequester continues and military personnel costs double, as projected, by 2025, we are convinced that end strength reductions in the Reserve Component are not a practical or long-term solution to ensuring our Nation's security in an era of fiscal restraints. As you are aware, Congress last year rightly rejected similar proposals that reduced end strength and force structure for the Air National Guard.

We strongly encourage you to avert a large end strength reduction that would inhibit our Army's ability to respond to world events and domestic emergencies. We look forward to reviewing your final decision, which we understand will be issued in the next several weeks, and to working with you to ensure a robust future Total Army.

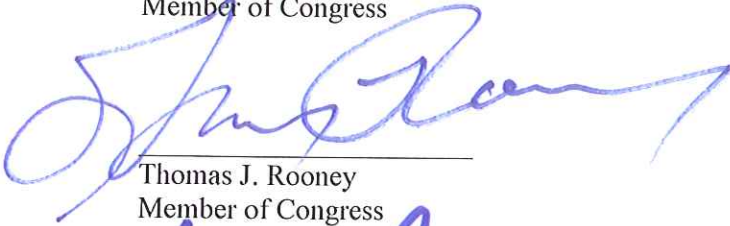
Sincerely,



Nick J. Rahall, II
Member of Congress



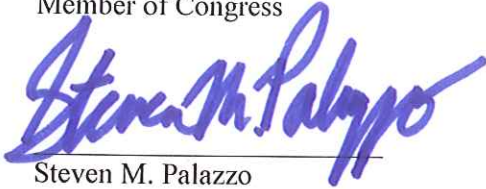
Candice S. Miller
Member of Congress



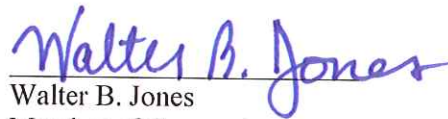
Thomas J. Rooney
Member of Congress



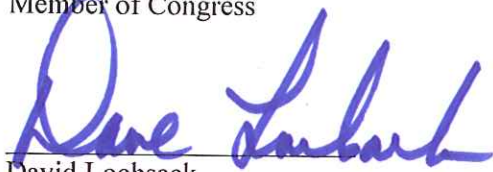
Michael T. McCaul
Member of Congress



Steven M. Palazzo
Member of Congress



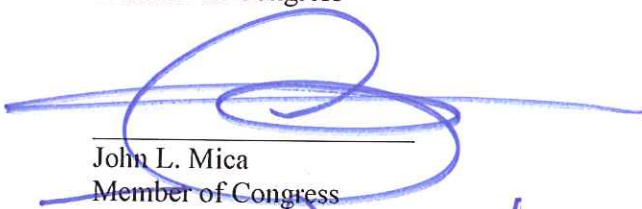
Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress



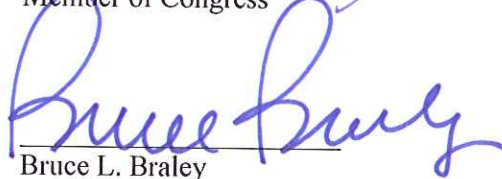
David Loebsack
Member of Congress



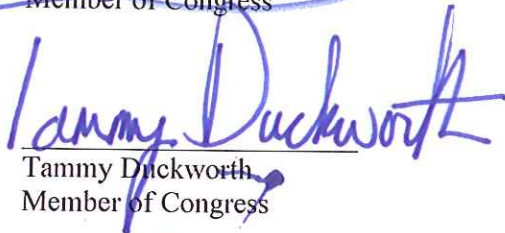
Steve King
Member of Congress



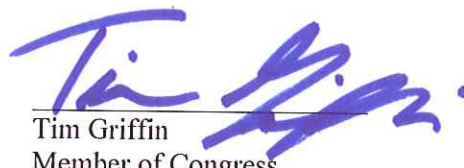
John L. Mica
Member of Congress



Bruce L. Braley
Member of Congress



Tammy Duckworth
Member of Congress



Tim Griffin
Member of Congress



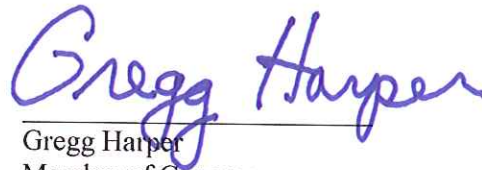
Don Young
Member of Congress



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Steve Womack
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Tulsi Gabbard
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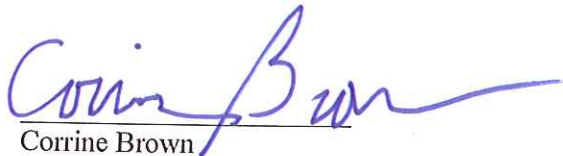
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Gene Green
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Charles W. Dent
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Corrine Brown
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Howard Coble
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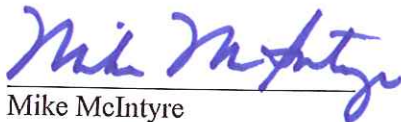
Pete Sessions
Member of Congress



Hank Johnson
Member of Congress



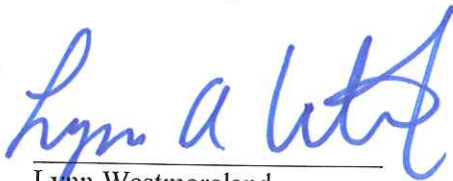
Michael Simpson
Member of Congress



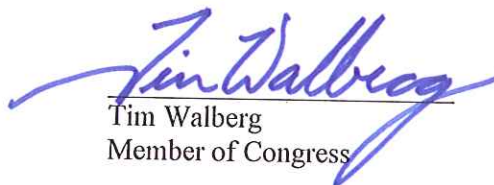
Mike McIntyre
Member of Congress



Michael Conaway
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Lynn Westmoreland
Member of Congress



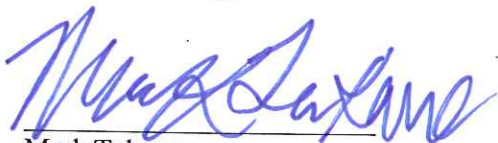
Tim Walberg
Member of Congress




Jim Gerlach
Member of Congress



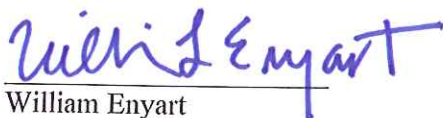
Robert Latta
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
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Jim Costa
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William Enyart
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Chellie Pingree
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Sam Graves
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Adam Kinzinger
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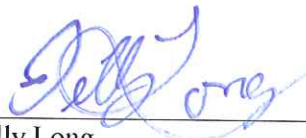
Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress



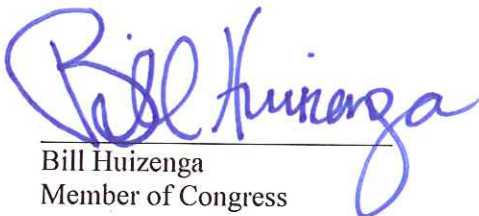
Kristi Noem
Member of Congress



Gary Peters
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Billy Long
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Bill Huizenga
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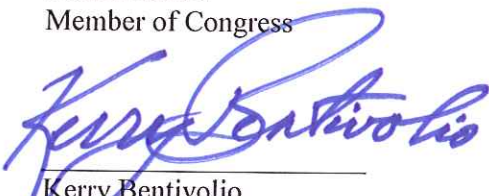
Dan Benishek
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Daniel Maffei
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Richard Hanna
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Kerry Bentivolio
Member of Congress



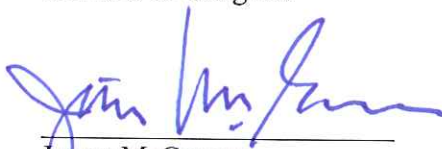
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Mark Pocan
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Annie Kuster
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James McGovern
Member of Congress



Brett Guthrie
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Pat Tiberi
Member of Congress



Kurt Schrader
Member of Congress



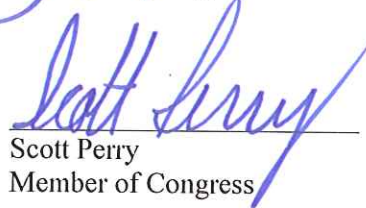
Cynthia Lummis
Member of Congress



Jeff Duncan
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Glenn Thompson
Member of Congress



Scott Perry
Member of Congress



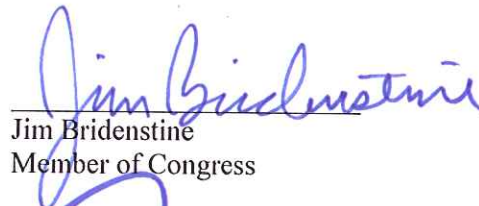
Erik Paulsen
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Frederica Wilson
Member of Congress



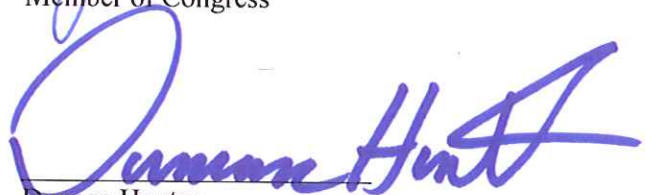
Joaquin Castro
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Jim Bridenstine
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Marsha Blackburn
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Duncan Hunter
Member of Congress



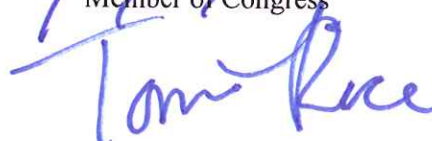
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James Lankford
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Thomas Massie
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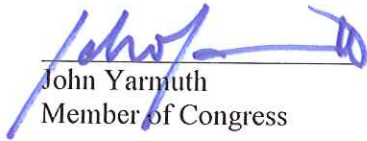
Tom Rice
Member of Congress



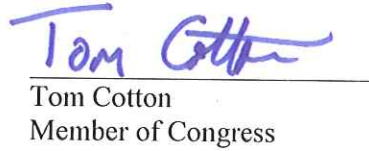
Aaron Schock
Member of Congress



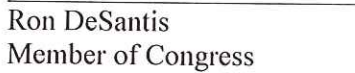
Peter King
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Tom Cotton
Member of Congress



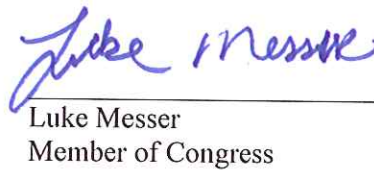
Ron DeSantis
Member of Congress



Richard Hudson
Member of Congress



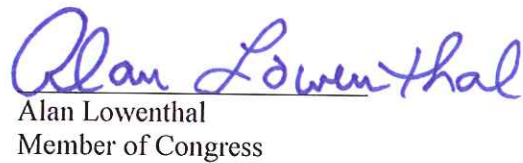
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



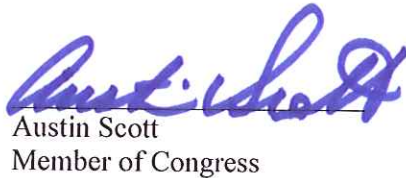
Luke Messer
Member of Congress



Elizabeth Esty
Member of Congress



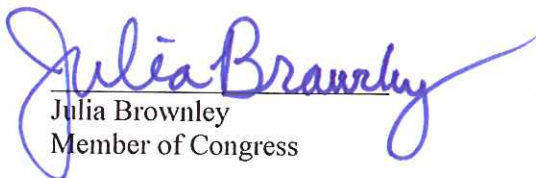
Alan Lowenthal
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Austin Scott
Member of Congress



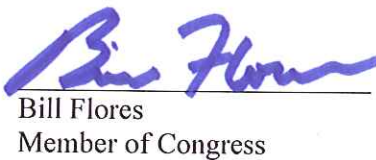
Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress



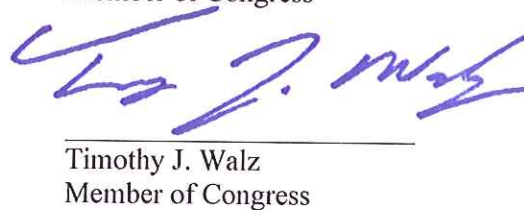
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Kay Granger
Member of Congress



Bill Flores
Member of Congress



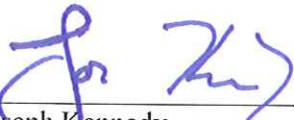
Timothy J. Walz
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Earl Blumenauer
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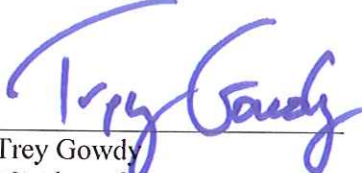
Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Joseph Kennedy
Member of Congress



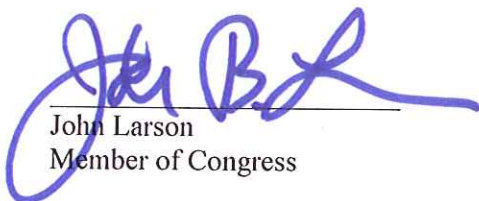
Steven Horsford
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Trey Gowdy
Member of Congress



Alan Nunnelee
Member of Congress



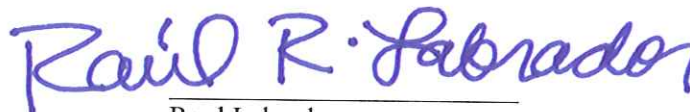
John Larson
Member of Congress



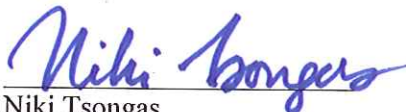
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



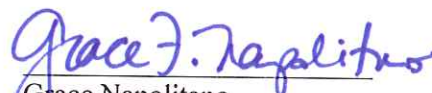
Susan Brooks
Member of Congress



Raul Labrador
Member of Congress



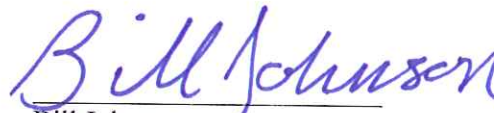
Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress



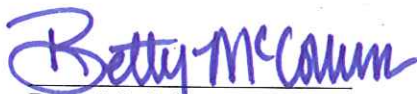
Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress



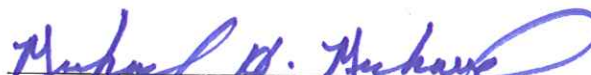
Gloria Negrete McLeod
Member of Congress



Bill Johnson
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

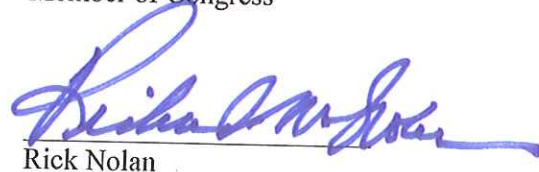


Mike Michaud
Member of Congress

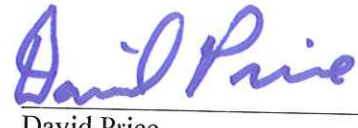

Richard Nugent
Member of Congress


Marlin Stutzman
Member of Congress

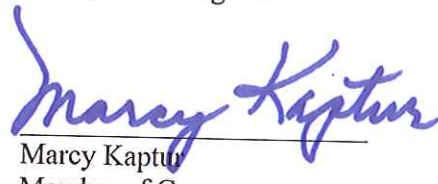

Collin Peterson
Member of Congress

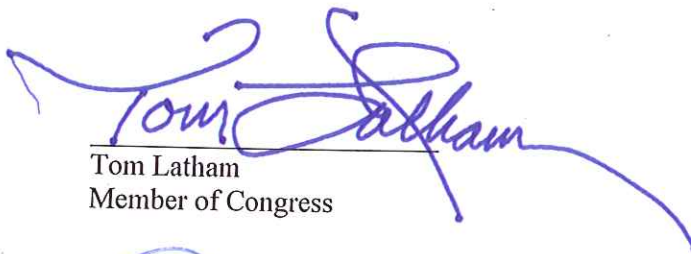

Rick Nolan
Member of Congress

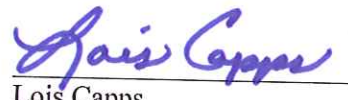

Danny Davis
Member of Congress


David Price
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Fred Upton
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Marcy Kaptur
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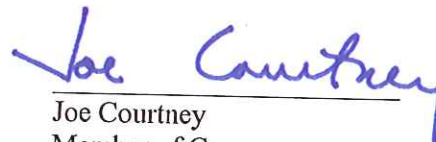

Tom Latham
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Lois Capps
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Peter Welch
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Gus Bilirakis
Member of Congress


Patrick McHenry
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Joe Courtney
Member of Congress


Shelley Moore Capito
Member of Congress


Rosa DeLauro
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C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
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Michele Bachmann
Member of Congress



Paul Broun
Member of Congress



Mike Coffman
Member of Congress



Thomas Petri
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Steve Israel
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Diane Black
Member of Congress



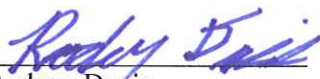
David Cicilline
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Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



Marc Veasey
Member of Congress



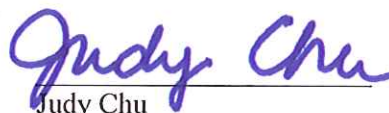
Rodney Davis
Member of Congress



Andre Carson
Member of Congress



Todd Rokita
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Cc: General Raymond T. Odierno
General Frank J. Grass